Coast and hold two Shallow Water Blocks, awarded under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), three Deep Water NELP locks and one Deep Water Block awarded on nomination basis. As on 01.10.2006, ONGC has acquired 1,10,867 kilometres of 2 Dimension (2D) Seismic, 4259 sq. km. of 3 Dimension (3D) Seismic and drilled 11 exploratory wells in shallow and deep water blocks since inception. 2D and 3D seismic data, along with other geo-scientific data, are interpreted to identify suitable drillable prospects.

Shortage of LPG in Kerala

668. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government, the dislocation of LPG supply in Kerala;

(b) the reasons for the acute shortage of LPG supply;

(c) whether it is a fact that 50 per cent of LPG produced in the Cochin Refineries is diverted to other States;

(d) whether the Ministry will take steps to allot the entire production of LPG in the Cochin Refinery in the State of Kerala itself to tide over frequent crisis; and

(e) whether the Ministry has received complaints from distributions in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a), (b) and (e) At present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors. However, OMCs have reported a backlog of one to three days in the State of Kerala due to transporters strike, bad road conditions and violence in Mangalore. A representation has been received from All India LPG Distributors Federation regarding LPG crisis in the State of Kerala. Government has advised OMCs to liquidate the backlog in the State of Kerala by operating the bottling plants on holidays and during extended hours.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Out of the total LPG produced at Kochi Refinery, nearly 85% is utilised to meet the demand of Kerala. After meeting this demand, the excess quantity is transported to neighbouring States.

Possibility of oil and natural gas reserves in Bihar

†669. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is strong possibility of large quantity of crude oil and natural gas reserves under the land of Bihar;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Hydrocarbon Directorate has confirmed the possibility of crude oil and natural gas in about 70 thousand Sq. Kms. of Ganga Basin and its three sub basins and Madhubani and Purnia districts of Bihar; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (e) Geologically, a part of Ganga valley sedimentary basin falls in Bihar and covers an area of approximately 70,000 Sq. Km. Ganga valley basin is divided into three sub basins from west to east, namely, Gandhak, Madhubani and Purnia. Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) has acquired 1170 GLK of 20 seismic data for carving out exploration blocks.

Presently, exploration work is in progress in one block, namely GVONN-2002/1, awarded under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-IV round) and falling in the districts of Madhubani, Madhepura, Saharsha, Khagaria, Begusarai, Darbhanga and Samastipur of Bihar. One more block has been offered under NELP-VI round in Bihar.

Import price of oil

670. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that price of crude oil in the international markets have witnessed a sharp decline over the last few months;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.